

The Goodwill Messenger

Published by the Village Church of Cummington

Ministry: All of us

Service 10:00 AM, 1st & 3rd Sundays

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P.O. Box 76, Cummington, MA 01026

cummingtonvillagechurch.org

Village Church—Open and Affirming—You are welcome here

CANDLE AT THE WINDOW

Outgoing pastoral message: I embark on my transition with immense gratitude for the people of this congregation. I’ve been your minister for more than two years and have very much loved serving this church. I’ve thought about you each week, imagined your faces, and received insights for sermons in the middle of the night. To be a minister is to seek meaning together. To be a minister is to hold space. I shared this a year ago: When you hold a community space that gathers light and love from Source, from God, then this intensifies. It can be a sanctuary, a water hole where people know they can come and drink. The Village Church follows this mission.

To be a minister is to offer positive directions. The first winter of COVID when we couldn’t hold services inside the building, I began to speak of the image of a candle at the window that stays lit no matter what. I visualize that candle as a constant.

I have two more Village Church services that I’ll be leading, and there’s descriptions with dates in the listing. As the church goes through a transition right now, I step aside as the new formation develops.

I remain a bridge person who can be called upon. For the last thirty-five years I have engaged in ministerial work, and these two years have been a very special chapter.

I will keep on being grateful that you are helping to keep the candle of Village Church lit.

—Rev. Sarah Pirtle, November 2022

CANDLE

A poem of good wishes written by Rev. Sarah Pirtle for the Village Church, on October 1, 2022

When you light a candle and say a prayer, it is not an empty act. When you light a candle with others, speaking for their welfare, the place where you are standing gathers the prayer and holds it. So when you are in a place where people have lit candles and set intentions over many years, there is a great gathering of light that holds these hopes. It becomes a place that reverberates with care, and will always.

This place becomes a boat. It travels and is carried on a river of good intentions, on a river powered by Source. In this boat, everybody on board learns about the currents of life and the endless nature of this river. This is where they became certain that there is a river of life.

They remember how the boat carried many through the passages. How they came together after the death of a loved one, or how they blessed their children there or perhaps their own marriage was held in loving hands in that very place.

We thank each other for gathering in a place where candles are lit, and for traveling this river of life and love together. We will always belong to each other. We can ensure that we will keep traveling with kindness, we will keep lighting the candles of care.

Transitions at the Village Church

While I chose to leave my leadership positions, I continue to support the Village Church and its efforts to remain a vibrant community center.

— Josh Wachtel

The Holiday Gift Program

The Holiday Gift Program, this year will provide gifts for children and grandchildren, filling requests for children from infancy through 17, for families that participate in the Hilltown food pantry. Supporters of the program, generally spend about \$50 per child. If you are interested in buying gifts for a child or a family, or wish to make a monetary donation, please contact: Pat Keith 413-563-1981 or Hilary Costa339-203-5535. Requests from the families will be submitted by November 11th and we ask that gifts be purchased by Sunday, December 18th. If you are purchasing gifts, we will get you the information about wrapping, etc., once we have received the requests.



Schedule

Service schedule for November and December. Please note the change in date—not the 20th but the 13th.

Rev. Sarah Pirtle’s Closing Services:

Nov 13, 10:00 AM, Rev. Sarah Pirtle, A Basket of Thanks

Sarah will share the directions and prayers closest to her heart as a gift of gratitude.

Nov 27, 10:00 AM

Hilltown Quaker Meeting

Dec 4, 10:00 AM, Rev. Sarah Pirtle, Blessing the Past, Present and Future of the Village Church

This will be a ceremony of transition as Sarah closes her ministry by passing along blessings and becoming a bridge person who continues to care about the Village Church.

REIMAGINING OUR FUTURE

Dear Goodwill Messenger readers,

During the last several months folks at the Village Church have been meeting to discuss plans for the coming year. Despite a reduction in giving, resulting in a deficit, we are unanimous in our decision to proceed with a modified program for the remainder of 2022 and into 2023. We will continue to offer at least two worship services per month. Rev. Sarah Pirtle will be the service leader on November 13 and December 4. Tim Walter is the service organizer for Quaker Meeting, which meets on the 4th Sunday of each month.

We aren’t claiming that all is well though. Like many, many churches, local and beyond, our stalwart Village Church continues to feel the effects of the pandemic with a decrease in attendance and giving. Yet at the same time the building is in need of extensive repairs, some quite expensive that can’t be delayed much longer.

It pleases us to tell you that the following programs will continue:

At least two church service each month: one Interfaith and one Quaker Meeting.

A weekly art class.

Weekly yoga class with Darlene.

A weekly home for homeschoolers.

Friday Night Café, beginning in January.

An occasional men’s group meeting.

The Hob Nob.

Community Dances.

Healing Shawl Ministry

Greenwood Music Camp summer Sundays

And that these programs are in the re-envisioning stages.

Al-Anon weekly meetings.

A pollinator garden.

Parent’s Night Out- Kid’s Games and Movie Night In

A book study group.

Women’s and Men’s Groups

“Lost and Found” programs we want to revive.

Pot Luck Community Gatherings

Our famous Pancake Breakfasts

The Rummage Sale

We believe that all of these programs, just imagine, all of these, are providing Comfort and Inspiration to you.

Details about some of these programs are elsewhere in this edition. Do you have an idea for a program? Or wish to see a service offered that’s not in town? Do you need a space to rent for a meeting or program? Please call us with your ideas, your concerns, or your needs. We are determined to continue to keep the Village Church open and serving the community well into the future. Since 1838 the Village Church has been a source of Comfort and Inspiration in this town, in these hills. That is a very long time, one hundred eighty-four years!

In closing, we emphasize , “We are open and moving forward! We are REIMAGINING OUR FUTURE.” We hope that you will join us for whatever piques your interest. For what just might surprise you with some unexpected and welcome, Comfort and Inspiration.

In community and with love,

Your friends at Village Church

Aging Gracefully in the Hilltowns

This is a Community discussion group, sponsored by the Council on Aging, focusing on Living Fully, Aging Gracefully, and Befriending Death, open to residents of the Hilltown area.

We talk about it all here, the good, the bad and the ugly! It’s a chance to share challenges and solutions, hopes and fears about aging well and living fully. Practical or philosophical, funny or sad - often both at the same time. Come join us!

We meet via zoom—the second Tuesday of each month from 1–3 PM. If you would like to join us online please send an email beforehand to Annie or Lucy.

For further information please contact: Wynne or Lucy 634 5576, wynlucy@gmailcom or Annie annieb@crocker.com

Ed. note: We held off putting out the Messenger this month so we could get in the latest church news. Please have any news for December to John at mrblooz@verizon.net or Pat at patakeith@gmail.com, mail to VCC, PO Box 76, Cummington, MA 01026 by November 27.

Yoga With Darlene

Invite you to join us, women and men, for yoga on Fridays from 8:45–10 AM at the Village Church on Main Street in Cummington. Contact me at Darleneamygr@gmail.com or 413-210-1038 for more information.

Friday Night Café

The good news is that after two years of outdoor, summer-only seasons the cafe is moving back into the Village Church, but with a twist... shows will happen in the Sanctuary - really in the “church”. The much loved, old familiar Vestry space is just too small to provide sufficient social distancing in this Covid era we now live in. Sadly, its intimacy has become its liability. That said, the Sanctuary is... glorious, and we can spread out. We will probably close every other pew, masking will be encouraged, and so on. At this point I think we are all pretty well versed in the protocols. Food and drink are not permitted in the Sanctuary, but we are considering providing some hot cider in the Vestry, for those who might wish to come early and have a cup.

The 2023 Season will happen in two Sessions: Session 1 from Jan. - June, and Session 2 from Sept. - Nov. Shows will be on the second and fourth Fridays each month from 7:00 - 9:00. We are beginning booking for the first Session. It's early, but we wanted to share the good news with you, and will keep you posted as things move along.

Once again brought to you by the friendly folks at the Village Church who believe music can be a powerful force for building community. (Attached is a document with some thoughts about the Friday Night Cafe, please take a look if you are so inclined.)

See you in January!

—John Bye - for Friday Night Cafe

Art Sessions

We are a group of people who enjoy getting together and painting. There is no formal teaching but there are people in the class that can offer advice on a particular challenge. Tables and chairs provided. Five dollars covers Wednesday class 11-3 at the Cummington church. Bring a lunch and use the back entry then turn left. All mediums welcome. Contact Barbara Konieczny if you are interested at 413-387-3517 or 634-2209. Thanks and hope to see you there.

barbarajkonieczny@gmail.com

16th ANNUAL HILLTOWN HOLIDAY HOB-NOB

Saturday, 3 Dec, 2022, 10AM-1PM

Village Church

32 Main Street, Cummington

Come hobnob with your neighbors at this community holiday gift re-exchange. Have fun with your commitment to more sharing and less consumption. It can even help you clean out your closets and save money! Come with GIFT quality items that you already have but do not need, are not using or even plain just don't want. Books, toys, games, music, art, gadgets, clothing, etc. are all welcome. They don't have to be perfect or in a box, you just have to know they would make a great gift for someone else. They will be displayed for others to choose as a gift they would like to give for the holidays. And of course, while you are there, pick out anything you see that you might like to give. All items are given and taken freely without money. Bring a small plate of goodies to share if you like. Please no plastic disposables, though. We will begin to accept donations on Saturday, November, 26, they can be left in the back entryway of the church.

If you have a question or want to drop off items for re-gifting in advance, email HilltownCROW@protonmail.com or phone 634-5031 x2

Sponsored by: HilltownCROW ReUse Project



Thank You!

MEMBER APPRECIATION
NOV, 19TH & 20TH
10% OFF YOUR PURCHASE
GOOD ON ALMOST EVERYTHING, NO TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, NEWSPAPERS

BOH News

Free Covid test kits are available at the Transfer Station. Take It or Leave It continues to be a good place to leave good, usable items and a place to find just what you might (or might not) need! Please no broken/dirty items. The Book Bin is where to drop books of any sort that you feel might not be useful in the Take It area. Used textiles, clothes, sheets, etc. and shoes are now accepted in the Textile Bin, they don't need to be separated but they must be left in a plastic bag.

Metal—The Board of Health is announcing that a fee for disposal of metal will no longer charged. Recycling metal will now be handled by a new vendor and the town will be paid for the metal rather than to have to pay for the service. This new program is due to the hard work of Bob Ely our Transfer Station Manager.

Mattress—All sizes will no longer be accepted at the Cummington Transfer Station. They will have to be delivered to the Williamsburg Transfer Station. For more information call: 413-268-8405. The address is: 27 Mountain Street, Williamsburg (the road to Whately)

Berkshire Trail and the Community House

At long last! We are very pleased to report that the town has received funding to complete feasibility studies on both buildings. We hope to do these simultaneously because they are so intertwined as far as foreseeable future uses. Stay tuned, we are very pleased to be back working on these projects!

Donations

To contribute to the Village Church, click on the “Donate” button on our website <https://cummingtonvillagechurch.org> where you may donate electronically via PayPal or credit/debit card. Please also consider setting up recurring payments through your bank's online banking service as this incurs no fees by the church. Thank you for helping support the Village Church

Homeschool Cooperative

The Village Homeschool Cooperative meets on Mondays at the Village Church. We are a group of 17 kids ages 4-11, led by Susan Warner, Cynthia Jirak and Molly Smith. We like being in the church, it makes a perfect place to play, cook, make and hang out. We ended our last session with a visit from the Expandable Brass Band who accompanied us as we danced with the giant dragon puppet we made named Talon Dreamer Spike. Lincoln Fishman of Sawyer Farm just started off our session to share his love of corn and methods of making tortillas. Jennifer Lee, Barbara Bricker and Sadie Stull are visiting us in the remaining weeks. We invite guests from the community to contact us if you feel you have wisdom and skill to share with the kids.

mollyvirginia@gmail.com

Messiah sing

Regretfully, we will not have a Messiah sing this year. In conversation with our conductor, Greg Hayes, we concluded there was too much uncertainty about getting musicians and soloists (our usual baritone, Steve Curylo, sadly passed away late last year) and too little time to really organize well. We hope to be back next year and carry on the tradition.

Village Church Has Space to Rent

One of the many wonderful things about the Village Church is its proximity to many neighboring hilltowns and our east and west cities, Northampton and Pittsfield. We are in the middle, and we have easy, well-lit parking. We like to keep our building busy and serving the community by offering rental space for individuals, families, and groups. For one event or an ongoing program we can offer you a large space with or without a kitchen, an office, and a beautiful sanctuary with good acoustics, all accessible. For more information call or text Scott at 413-320-6544.

Help Wanted

Snow removal needed

The Village Church is in need of someone to clear the front sidewalk, the path to the front steps and the accessible walkway. Teenagers, as well as adults are welcome and encouraged to call Conrad at 634-5353 to express interest and get more information.



THE THRIFTY CROW

FALL HOURS

Tuesdays 10-4
Fridays 12-4
and by Chance or Appointment

Supporting wildlife rehabilitation and conservation in the Hilltowns

790 Berkshire Trail, Cummington
(Rt. 9, just west of Packard St.)

Donations greatly appreciated but first.

Leave a message at
HilltownCROW@protonmail.com
or 634-5031, extension 2
& find us on
[facebook.com/thethriftycrow](https://www.facebook.com/thethriftycrow)

Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Notice 10/22/22

In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L. Ch. 40A, § 11, the Cummington Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing at the Community House, 33 Main Street, on Friday, November 18, 2022, starting at 7:00 PM, to consider the application of DBA EMJ LLC for a special permit for a marijuana establishment as provided by Sections 5-20 (Other business uses), and 10-50 (Adult Marijuana Establishments), of the zoning bylaw. The Applicant is proposing an entirely indoor cultivation site to be located in an existing structure located at 205 West Cummington Road. DBA EMJ LLC has already been granted a Tier 1 cultivation license (allowing up to 5,000 square feet of canopy). The complete application is available on the town's website (www.cummington-ma.gov). [Click here for link to application.](#)

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on these matters should appear at the above-designated time and place.

It is possible that appropriate distancing and/or masks may still be required of all in-person attendees.

Michael Holden, Clerk Cummington Zoning Board of Appeals